



Criteria on Toxic Chemicals

Greenpeace wants to see electronics companies clean up their act.

Substituting harmful chemicals in the production of electronics will prevent worker exposure to these substances and contamination of communities that neighbour production facilities. Eliminating harmful substances will also prevent leaching/off-gassing of chemicals like brominated flame retardants (BFR) during use, and enable electronic scrap to be safely recycled. The presence of toxic substances in electronics perpetuates the toxic cycle – during reprocessing of electronic waste and by using contaminated secondary materials to make new products.

The issue of toxicity is overarching. Until the use of toxic substances is eliminated, it is impossible to secure 'safe' recycling. For this reason, the points awarded to corporate practice on chemicals are weighted more heavily than criteria on recycling.

Although there are five criteria on both chemicals and waste, the top score on chemicals is 18 points, as double points are awarded for vinyl plastic-free (PVC) and BFR-free models on the market, whereas the top score on e-waste is 15 points.

The criteria on Precautionary Principle and Chemicals Management remain the same. The criterion: BFR-free and PVC-free models on the market, also remains the same and continues to score double points.

The two former criteria: Commitment to eliminating PVC with timeline and Commitment to eliminating all BFRs with timeline, have been merged into one criterion, with the lower level of commitment to PVC or BFR elimination determining the score on this criterion.

A new criterion has been added, namely Phase out of additional substances with timeline(s). The additional substances, many of which have already been identified by the brands as suspect substances for potential future elimination are:

- (1) all phthalates,
- (2) beryllium, including alloys and compounds and
- (3) antimony/antimony compounds

Criteria on e-waste

Greenpeace expects companies to take financial responsibility for dealing with the electronic waste (e-waste) generated by their products, to take back discarded products in all countries with sales of their products and to re-use or recycle them responsibly. Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) provides a feedback loop to the product designers of the end-of-life costs of treating discarded electronic products and thus an incentive to design out those costs.

An additional e-waste criterion has been added and most of the existing criteria have been sharpened, with additional demands. The new e-waste criterion requires the brands to report on the use of recycled plastic content across all products and provide timelines for increasing content.

Criteria on energy

The five new energy criteria address key expectations that Greenpeace has of responsible companies that are serious about tackling climate change. They are:

- (1) Support for global mandatory reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- (2) Disclosure of the company's own GHG emissions plus emissions from two stages of the supply chain;
- (3) Commitment to reduce the company's own GHG emissions with timelines;
- (4) Amount of renewable energy used
- (5) Energy efficiency of new models (companies score double on this criterion)

[Click here to see more detailed information on the ranking](#)

Ranking criteria explained

As of the 8th edition of the Guide to Greener Electronics, Greenpeace scores electronics brands on a tightened set of chemicals and e-waste criteria, (which include new criteria) and on new energy criteria.

The ranking criteria reflect the demands of the Toxic Tech campaign to electronics companies. Our two demands are that companies should:

- (1) clean up their products by eliminating hazardous substances; and
- (2) take-back and recycle their products responsibly once they become obsolete.

The two issues are connected: the use of harmful chemicals in electronic products prevents their safe recycling once the products are discarded.

Given the increasing evidence of climate change and the urgency of addressing this issue, Greenpeace has added new energy criteria to encourage electronics companies to:

- (3) improve their corporate policies and practices with respect to Climate and Energy

Ranking regrading: Companies have the opportunity to move towards a greener ranking as the guide will continue to be updated every quarter. However penalty points will be deducted from overall scores if Greenpeace finds a company lying, practicing double standards or other corporate misconduct.

Disclaimer: Greenpeace's 'Guide to Greener Electronics' aims to clean up the electronics sector and get manufacturers to take responsibility for the full life cycle of their products, including the electronic waste that their products generate and the energy used by their products and operations.

The guide does not rank companies on labour standards, social responsibility or any other issues, but recognises that these are important in the production and use of electronics products.

Changes in ranking guide: We first released our 'Guide to Greener Electronics' in August 2006, which ranked the 14 top manufacturers of personal computers and mobile phones according to their policies on toxic chemicals and recycling.

In the sixth issue of the Guide, we added the leading manufacturers of TVs – namely, Philips and Sharp – and the game console producers Nintendo and Microsoft. The other market leaders for TVs and game consoles are already included in the Guide.

In the eighth edition, we sharpened some of the existing ranking criteria on toxic chemicals and e-waste and added a criterion on each issue. We also added five new energy criteria.

From this version of the Guide, Fujitsu Siemens Computers will no longer be scored. Fujitsu will acquire the Siemens share in Fujitsu Siemens Computers (FSC). The new company will operate under the brand Fujitsu from April 1, 2009. Fujitsu will be evaluated in the next Guide due in June 2009.

For the latest version greenpeace.org/greenelectronics

In this version of the Guide, PC manufacturers HP, Lenovo and Dell have been served a penalty point for backtracking on their commitment to eliminate vinyl plastic (PVC) and brominated flame retardants (BFRs) from their products by the end of 2009.

ACER Ranking = 4.5/10

Acer's score has dropped slightly from 4.7 to 4.5 points, but it stays in 11th place. The company is not penalised for backtracking on its commitment to eliminate PVC vinyl plastic and brominated flame retardants (BFRs) in all products by the end of 2009 as internal communication with Acer reveals that it believes that it can still meet this commitment.

Acer scores most points for its efforts on toxic chemicals with a commitment to phase out all phthalates, beryllium and compounds and antimony and compounds in all new products by 2012. However, it does not yet have any products that are completely free of PVC and BFRs on the market, although a few models of monitor are almost free of BFRs and PVC, except for the power cord.

Acer scores poorly on e-waste even though it is reporting a recycling rate of 31.7% based on past sales, for desktops and notebooks, but only those sold and recycled in Taiwan. It loses a point for failing to operationalise and do more lobbying for Individual Producer Responsibility.

On energy, Acer scores points for supporting global cuts in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 50% by 2050 and 30% by 2020 from industrialised countries (compared to 1990 levels). It provides data on its GHG emissions in Taiwan and for reporting on the energy efficiency of its products; since 20 July 2007, 75% of Acer's notebook PCs, 10% of desktop PCs and 100% of LCD monitors have been verified as Energy Star compliant.

ACER Overall Score

	BAD (0)	PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	PARTIALLY GOOD (2+)	GOOD (3+)
Precautionary Principle				
Chemicals Management				
Timeline for PVC & BFR phaseout				
Timeline for additional substances phaseout				
PVC-free and/or BFR-free models <small>(companies score double on this criterion)</small>				
Individual producer responsibility				
Voluntary take-back				
Information to individual customers				
Amounts recycled				
Use of recycled plastic content				
Global GHG emissions reduction support				
Carbon Footprint disclosure				
Own GHG emissions reduction commitment				
Amounts of renewable energy used				
Energy efficiency of new models				

ACER Detailed Scoring

Chemicals

Precautionary Principle	Chemicals Management	Timeline for PVC & BFR phaseout	Timeline for additional substances phaseout	PVC-free and/or BFR-free models (double points)
GOOD (3+)	GOOD (3+)	GOOD (3+)	GOOD (3+)	BAD (0)
Acer scores top marks on its statement on the precautionary principle that recognises the need for preventive action, even if scientific evidence is not conclusive. More information here and here.	Top marks for describing the mechanisms for identifying future substances of concern. Supply chain management. HSF Planning.	Acer pledges to prohibit PVC and BFRs from use in new products by 2009, in their Hazardous Substances Free (HSF) plan. Technology assessment results.	Acer has adopted a timeline of 2012 for the phase out of all phthalates, beryllium and compounds and antimony and compounds in all new products. Certain phthalates are to be phased out by 2009. More information.	Acer has recently released several models of monitors, including the G24 LCD monitor whose casing, PWB laminates, connectors and internal wiring are BFR and PVC-free, but not the panel. From December 2008 a new version of the G24 LCD monitor and several other models of LCD monitor are free of BFRs and PVC in all the above as well as both the system and panel, but not the power cord. More information.

E-Waste

Support for Individual Producer Responsibility	Provides voluntary take-back where no EPR laws exist	Provides info for individual customers on take-back in all countries where products are sold	Reports on amount of e-waste collected and recycled	Use of recycled plastic content in products - and timelines for increasing content
PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	BAD (0)
Acer supports and actively strives for IPR. To score more points, Acer needs to provide examples of where it is doing advocacy and details of operationalisation of IPR. More information.	Acer provides take-back services where required to do so by national EPR laws. Exceptions are some US states and Canadian provinces where Acer provides contacts to SVTC and to recyclers and India, where Acer now takes back and recycles for free. More information.	Recycling information provided for EU, Japanese, Taiwanese and Indian customers only. Information for US customers needs to be more relevant. More information. Europe. Taiwan. Japan. India.	Acer now reports a recycling rate of 29.8% in 2007 based on sales 6 years ago, for desktops and notebooks sold and recycled in Taiwan. However, the data is only for Taiwan and relies on many assumptions. More information.	Currently no Acer products contain recycled plastics, however Acer is following technological advancements in applications of secondary plastics. More information.

Energy

Support for global mandatory reduction of GHG emissions	Company carbon footprint disclosure	Commitment to reduce own direct GHG emissions	Amount of renewable energy used	Energy efficiency of New Models (double points)
PARTIALLY GOOD (2+)	PARTIALLY BAD (1+)	BAD (0)	BAD (0)	PARTIALLY GOOD (2+)
Acer supports the reduction targets proposed by the EU, which are to cut GHG emissions by at least 50% by 2050 globally and 30% by 2020 from industrialized countries (compared to 1990 levels). To score full marks Acer needs to support cuts of at least 30% by 2020 from industrialised countries. More information.	Acer reports on its GHG emissions from its operations in Taiwan, including two subsidiaries that in total emitted 25,680 CO ₂ equivalent tonnes in 2007. Acer plans to extend this reporting in stages to its global operations, and to its supply chain, through the Supply Chain Leadership Collaboration (SCLC) of the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). More information.	Acer expected to finalize its mid- and long-term GHG reduction targets in winter 2008. No reduction targets are provided and no update given to explain the delay. More information.	A global survey was to have been conducted in 2008 on purchasing renewable energy. Acer is also assessing the feasibility of using renewable energy such as solar power and wind power in its global operations. Acer needs to update its website with the results of this survey. More information.	Since Energy Star published its updated standards on July 20, 2007, 65% of Acer's notebook PCs, 19% of desktop PCs and 100% of LCD monitors have been verified as Energy Star compliant. Computers need to leave the factory with the highest settings for energy efficiency. More information.